

**WHEREAS**, the state shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and to provide conditions of health empowerment, where each individual has access to information and services that will bring about health and well-being;

**WHEREAS**, the Primary Health Care Approach is recognized as the major strategy towards health empowerment, emphasizing the need to provide adequate, accessible and acceptable health services through participatory strategies such as health education, training of barangay health workers, community building and organizing;

**WHEREAS**, the institutionalization of an effective Barangay Health Workers Program shall undeniably strengthen the Primary Health Care Services of the City;

**WHEREAS**, the City Government cognizant of the role of the BHWs as frontliners in the delivery of Primary Health Care Services shall recognize the rights of BHWs to organize themselves, to have access to mechanisms and resources in support of efforts to improve their services for the communities and shall provide access to opportunities for their professional development;

**WHEREAS**, in the implementation of the BHW program the principle of voluntarism shall be consistently promoted and observed by all parties concerned while recognizing the need for developing and institutionalizing a support system for BHWs;

**WHEREAS**, this ordinance shall provide guidance and measures in professionalizing Barangay Health Workers to enable them to effectively participate in health care and development of the city;

**NOW THEREFORE**, on motion of City Councilor Rosalita T. Nuñez, duly seconded by City Councilors \_\_\_\_\_, be it-

**RESOLVED** as it is hereby resolved, to adopt the following ordinance:

**ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_**  
Series of 2017

AN ORDINANCE INSTITUTIONALIZING THE BARANGAY HEALTH WORKERS (BHWs) OF GENERAL SANTOS CITY AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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*Be it enacted by the Sangguniang Panlungsod of General Santos that:*

Section 1. **Short Title.** – This ordinance shall be known as “The Ordinance Institutionalizing the Barangay Health Workers of General Santos City and for Other Purposes.”

Section 2. **Definition of Terms.** - For the purpose of this ordinance, the following terms are defined:

- a) **Accredited Government or Non-Government Organization (NGO)** – refers to a government agency or institution or a non-government organization whose basic BHW training program has been accredited by the Department of Health.
- b) **Barangay Health Worker** - refers to a person who has undergone training programs under any accredited government and non-government organization and who voluntarily renders primarily health care services in the community after having been accredited to function as such by the Local Health Board (LHB) in accordance with the guidelines promulgated by the Department of Health (DOH).

- c) **Barangay Health Worker Accreditation** – refers to the official acknowledgment by the Local Health Board of the merits of a BHW in meeting the standards prescribed by this Ordinance.
- d) **BHWA** – means the Barangay Health Workers Association.
- e) **LHB-RAC** – means the Local Health Board Registration and Accreditation Committee.
- f) **Primary Health Care Services** – refer to essential health care services such as education on prevailing health problems, the methods of preventing and controlling them; promotion of adequate food supply and proper nutrition; basic environment sanitation and adequate supply of safe water; maternal and child care including family planning and immunization against major infectious disease; prevention and control of locally endemic diseases; appropriate treatment of common diseases and injuries; promotion of mental health; prevention of oral-dental diseases and promotion of dental health; provision and proper use of essential drugs and herbal medicines; and access and utilization of hospital care as centers of wellness.
- g) **Voluntary Service** – refers to health and health related activities rendered by Barangay Health Worker on his/her own free will, responsive to the needs of the community, and for which he/she has no certificate of appointment and is not given any remuneration or salary.

Section 3. **The BHW Registration and Accreditation Committee (BHW-RAC).**  
 – To facilitate registration and accreditation of Barangay Health Workers, the Local Health Board may create a Barangay Health Worker Registration and Accreditation Committee (BHW-RAC) with the following core composition:

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|------------|--|
| Chair      | - City Health Officer  |
| Vice-Chair | - SP Committee on Health and Sanitation  |
| Members    | - Representative from DOH accredited NGOs/POs                                  |
|            | - President of Barangay Health Workers Federation                              |
|            | - DOH representative to Local Health Board                                     |
|            | - President of Association of Barangay Captains (ABC)                          |
|            | - President of the Barangay Chairmen - Committee on Health and Sanitation, and |
|            | - President of Barangay Health Workers Federation                              |

In order of barangay health worker to be entitled to benefits and incentives, he/she shall register with the BHW-RAC which shall furnish a copy of such registry to the DOH.

Only accredited BHWs by the Local Health Board as recommended by the BHW-RAC shall be recognized by the City Health Office.

Section 4. **Number of Barangay Health Workers.** - The Local Health Board shall determine the ideal ratio of barangay health workers to the number of households, provided that the total number of barangay health workers shall not exceed one percent (1%) of the total population of the city.

Provided further, that each purok in the barangay shall have at least a minimum of one (1) Barangay Health Worker.

Section 5. **Qualification for Registration.** – To qualify for registration, a Barangay Health Worker must:

- a) Have completed the DOH basic training course for BHWs conducted by the accredited government agency or NGO;

- b) Be at least eighteen (18) years of age as of the date of the filing of the application for registration and not more than 65 years old;
- c) Have tendered voluntary primary health care services for at least one (1) year immediately preceding the date of the filing of application for registration in his/her barangay as certified by the Rural Health Midwife (BHM) assigned to his/her barangay, or by a duly authorized representative of an NGO operating in the barangay who has personal knowledge about the BHW's performance and by the head of his/her Barangay Health Workers Association (BHWA); and
- d) Be physically and mentally fit.

**Section 6. Procedure for Accreditation. –**

- a) *Filing of Application.* The BHW applicant shall submit to the Local Health Board or to BHW-RAC, the following documents:
  - i) A duly accomplished registration form;
  - ii) Birth Certificate or any official document in support of declared age;
  - iii) A certificate of completion of the BHW Basic Training Course;
  - iv) A certificate from the Local Health Board or from a duly authorized representative of an NGO and the head of the BHWA about the applicant BHW's service record stating that he/she has personal knowledge about the BHW having rendered voluntary primary health care service in his/her barangay for at least three (3) years immediately preceding the date of the filing of the application for registration;
  - v) A medical certificate duly signed by a government physician; and
  - vi) A Barangay Chairman's certificate attesting to the BHW's residence in the barangay being served.
- b) *Evaluation of Application.* Upon submission of application to Local Health Board of all required documents, the Board on its own or through its BFW-RAC shall:
  - i) Evaluate the application and its supporting documents; and
  - ii) Interview the applicant BHW when deemed necessary.
- c) *Board Decision on the Application for Accreditation.* The Local Health Board shall deliberate and decide on the application and its supporting documents within thirty (30) calendar days from receipt thereof. However, the application shall be deemed approved, should the Board fail to act within the said period.
- d) *Posting of Board Decision.* The Board's action on the application for accreditation shall be posted, within thirty (30) calendar days from the date of the decision, in a conspicuous place at the Barangay Hall.
- e) *Issuance of Certificate of Accreditation.* Within ten (10) calendar days after the approval of the application, the Local Health Board shall issue to the BHW the corresponding certificate of accreditation, signed by the Chair of his/her designated representative .
- f) *Notice of Disapproval.* A notice of disapproval stating the reasons for the decision shall be issued by the Board to the BHW concerned.

Section 7. **Annual Registration.** – The BHW must register annually with the Local Health Board. Registration for the first year of implementation shall immediately start after the effectivity thereof. For the renewal of registration, the following documents must be submitted:

- a) A duly accomplished form for renewal of registration; and
- b) A certificate of service record for the year prior to the renewal of registration as certified by the Rural Health Head (RHH) of the Barangay or NGO representative, and head of BHWA.

Section 8 Only BHWs accredited by the Local Health Board-RAC shall be recognized by the Local Health Board.

Section 9. **The Role of the City Health Officer and the Rural Health Officer.** – The City Health Officer through its Head, shall act as Chair of the BHW-RAC. It shall prepare and maintain the local registry of BHWs and also ensure the participation of BHWs in health-related activities in their localities. It shall provide technical guidance to BHWs through the Rural Health Midwife (RHM) in the delivery of primary health care services. The BHW shall report and be responsible to the Head of the Rural Health Center within the barangay where he/she is assigned.

Section 10. **Functions of a Barangay Health Worker.** – Considering that the work of a registered and/or accredited BHW varies from community to community, an agreement must be reached between community leaders and the BHW regarding his/her main task. Notwithstanding said agreement, the BHW shall continue discharging his/her duties and responsibilities as a community organizer, educator, and a primary health care services provider enumerated hereunder:

- a) As a Community Organizer, he/she shall participate in organizing and mobilizing the community towards self-reliance by:
  - i) Maintaining regular communication with community leaders and professional health workers;
  - ii) Providing linkage between the community and local health agencies;
  - iii) Assisting the community to develop a health plan and to take action to promote their health and well-being;
  - iv) Facilitating the community members to identify and respond to their community health problems;
  - v) Keeping records of the work activities on health; and
  - vi) Developing appropriate knowledge and skills among community members to promote their participation in local health initiatives.
- b) As an Educator, he/she shall provide knowledge and skills to community members in the prevention and management of simple illnesses by:
  - i) Conducting health classes and/or household teachings;
  - ii) Updating knowledge of communities on relevant health issues; and
  - iii) Distributing appropriate information, education, and communication materials.
- c) As a Health Care Service Provider, he/she shall render primary health care services to the members of the community by:
  - i) Providing primary health care services;
  - ii) Referring patients with complication and those suspected to have communicable disease to the appropriate health center or hospital;

- iii) Monitoring the health status of the household members under his/her area of service coverage;
- iv) Keeping records of health activities in the community and the health stations; and
- v) Ensuring the proper maintenance of the health station and the safe custody of its equipment, medical supplies and health records.

Section 11. **Notice of Transfer of Residence within General Santos City.** – In case of transfer of residence, an accredited BHW shall notify his/her RHM, Barangay Chairman and the BHW-RAC of both the old and the new residences. This is mandatory for the purpose of upgrading the master list and subsequent renewal of registration.

Section 12. **Benefits and Incentives.** – In recognition of their services, all accredited barangay health workers who are actively and regularly performing their duties shall be entitled to the following incentives and benefits:

- a) *Hazard Allowance* – A volunteer barangay health worker in rural and urban areas, exposed to situations, conditions or factors in the work environment or place where foreseeable but unavoidable danger or risks exist which adversely endanger his/her health or life and/or increase the risk of producing adverse on his/her person in the exercise of his/her duties, to be validated by the proper authorities, shall be entitled to hazard allowance in an amount to be determined by the Local Health Board and the Committee on Public Order and Safety of General Santos City.
- b) *Subsistence Allowance* – A Barangay Health Worker who renders service within the premises of isolated barangay health stations in order to make his/her services available at any and all times, shall be entitled to subsistence allowance equivalent to the meals they take in the course of his/her duty, which shall be computed in accordance with prevailing circumstances as determined by the city.
- c) *Honorarium.* An honorarium of at least Five Hundred Pesos (₱ 500.00) for registered BHWs and at least One Thousand Pesos (₱ 1,000.00) for the accredited BHWs per month. (can use the Disaster Fund as allegedly part of which is intended for the volunteer workers, and the same BHWs respond to disastrous events.)
- d) *Training Education and Career Enrichment Programs* – The Department of Health (DOH) in accordance with the Department of Education and other concerned agencies and non-government organizations, shall provide for the following:
  - i) educational programs which shall recognize years of primary health care service as credits to higher education in institutions with stepladder curricula that will entitle barangay health workers to upgrade his/her skills and knowledge for community work or to pursue further training as midwife, pharmacist, nurse or doctor;
  - ii) continuing education, study and expose tours, training, grants, field immersion, scholarship, etc.
  - iii) scholarship benefits in the form of tuition fees in state colleges to be granted to one child of every accredited barangay health worker who will not be able to take advantage of the above programs, and;
  - iv) special training programs such as those traditional medicine, disaster preparedness and other programs that address emergent community health problems and issues.
- e) *Civil Service Eligibility* – A second grade eligibility shall be granted to barangay health worker who has rendered five (5) years continuous service as such:

Provided, That the barangay health worker become a regular employee of the government, the total number of years served as accredited barangay health worker shall be credited to his/her service in computing retirement benefits. An applicant for second Grade Civil Service Eligibility must have at least two years of college education.”

- f) *Free Legal Services* – Legal representation and consultation services for barangay health worker shall be immediately provided by the Public Attorney’s Office in cases of coercion, interference, and in other civil and criminal cases filed by or against barangay health worker arising out of or in connection with the performance of his/her duties as such.
- g) *Preferential Access to Loan* – The DOH in connection with other concerned government agencies shall provide, within one hundred eighty (180) days after the effectivity of this Ordinance, a mechanism for access to loan service by organized barangay health workers. The agencies providing loan services will set aside one percent (1%) of his/her loanable funds for organized barangay health worker groups that have community-based income generating projects in support of health programs or activities.

Section 13. **Review by the Local Health Board.** – Every incentive or benefit for barangay health worker requiring the expenditure of local funds shall be reviewed and approved by the local health board to ensure that only the deserving accredited barangay health workers get the same.

Section 14. **Funding Requirements.** – The City Government shall allocate the amount of Three Million pesos (₱ 3,000,000.00) in its annual budget to support the BHW program of General Santos City.

Section 15. **Applicability Clause.** – All provisions of Republic Act 7883 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations will be supplementary to this Ordinance.

Section 16. **Repealing Clause.** - All previous ordinances and provisions inconsistent with this Ordinance shall be deemed repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 17. **Separability Clause.** If for any reasons any part of provisions of this Ordinance shall be held unconstitutional or invalid, other parts of provisions thereof which are not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

Section 18. **Effectivity.** - This Ordinance shall take effect Fifteen (15) days after its publication in a newspaper of general circulation in General Santos City.

Drafted by:

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August 9, 2017 (Third Revision)

Reviewed by:

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